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(4) The wage rates to be paid to the workers with disabilities for work comparable to that performed by experienced nondisabled workers.

(b) In order to be granted a certificate authorizing the employment of workers with disabilities at special minimum wage rates, the employer must provide the following written assurances concerning such employment:

(1) In the case of individuals paid hourly rates, the special minimum wage rates will be reviewed by the employer at periodic intervals at a minimum of once every six months; and,

(2) Wages for all employees will be adjusted by the employer at periodic intervals at a minimum of once each year to reflect changes in the prevailing wages paid to experienced nondisabled individuals employed in the locality for essentially the same type of work.

§ 525.10 Prevailing wage rates.

(a) A prevailing wage rate is a wage rate that is paid to an experienced worker not disabled for the work to be performed. The Department recognizes that there may be more than one wage rate for a specific type of work in a given area. An employer must be able to demonstrate that the rate being used as prevailing for determining a commensurate wage was objectively determined according to the guidelines contained in this section.

(b) An employer whose work force primarily consists of nondisabled workers or who employs more than a token number of nondisabled workers doing similar work may use as the prevailing wage the wage rate paid to that employer's experienced nondisabled employees performing similar work. Where an agency places a worker or workers with disabilities on the premises of an employer described above, the wage paid to the employer's experienced workers may be used as prevailing.

(c) An employer whose work force primarily consists of workers disabled for the work to be performed may determine the prevailing wage by ascertaining the wage rates paid to the experienced nondisabled workers of other employers in the vicinity. Such data may be obtained by surveying

comparable firms in the area that employ primarily nondisabled workers doing similar work. The firms surveyed must be representative of comparable firms in terms of wages paid to experienced workers doing similar work. The appropriate size of such a sample will depend on the number of firms doing similar work but should include no less than three firms unless there are fewer firms doing such work in the area. A comparable firm is one which is of similar size in terms of employees or which competes for or bids on contracts of a similar size or nature. Employers may contact other sources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics or private or State employment services where surveys are not practical. If similar work cannot be found in the area defined by the geographic labor market, the closest comparable community may be used.

(d) The prevailing wage rate must be based upon the wage rate paid to experienced nondisabled workers as defined elsewhere in these regulations. Employment services which only provide entry level wage data are not acceptable as sources for prevailing wage information as required in these regulations.

(e) There is no prescribed method for tabulating the results of a prevailing wage survey. For example, either a weighted or unweighted average would be acceptable provided the employer is consistent in the methodology used.

(f) The prevailing wage must be based upon work utilizing similar methods and equipment. Where the employer is unable to obtain the prevailing wage for a specific job to be performed on the premises, such as collating documents, it would be acceptable to use as the prevailing wage the wage paid to experienced individuals employed in similar jobs such as file clerk or general office clerk, requiring the same general skill levels.

(g) The following information should be recorded in documenting the determination of prevailing wage rates:

(1) Date of contact with firm or other source;

(2) Name, address, and phone number of firm or other source contacted;

(3) Individual contacted within firm or source;

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- (4) Title of individual contacted;
- (5) Wage rate information provided;
- (6) Brief description of work for which wage information is provided;
- (7) Basis for the conclusion that wage rate is not based upon an entry level position. (See also §525.10(c).)
- (h) A prevailing wage may not be less than the minimum wage specified in section 6(a) of FLSA.

§ 525.11 Issuance of certificates.

- (a) Upon consideration of the criteria cited in these regulations, a special certificate may be issued.
- (b) If a special minimum wage certificate is issued, a copy shall be sent to the employer. If denied, the employer will be notified in writing and told the reasons for the denial, as well as the right to petition under §525.18.

§ 525.12 Terms and conditions of special minimum wage certificates.

- (a) A special minimum wage certificate shall specify the terms and conditions under which it is granted.
- (b) A special minimum wage certificate shall apply to all workers employed by the employer to which the special certificate is granted provided such workers are in fact disabled for the work they are to perform.
- (c) A special minimum wage certificate shall be effective for a period to be designated by the Administrator. Workers with disabilities may be paid wages lower than the statutory minimum wage rate set forth in section 6 of FLSA only during the effective period of the certificate.
- (d) Workers paid under special minimum wage certificates shall be paid wages commensurate with those paid experienced nondisabled workers employed in the vicinity in which they are employed for essentially the same type, quality, and quantity of work.
- (e) Workers with disabilities shall be paid not less than one and one-half times their regular rates of pay for all hours worked in excess of the maximum workweek applicable under section 7 of FLSA.
- (f) The wages of all workers paid a special minimum wage under this part shall be adjusted by the employer at periodic intervals at a minimum of once a year to reflect changes in the

prevailing wages paid to experienced individuals not disabled for the work to be performed employed in the vicinity for essentially the same type of work.

(g) Each worker with a disability and, where appropriate, a parent or guardian of the worker, shall be informed, orally and in writing, of the terms of the certificate under which such worker is employed. This requirement may be satisfied by making copies of the certificate available. Where a worker with disabilities displays an understanding of the terms of a certificate and requests that other parties not be informed, it is not necessary to inform a parent or guardian.

(h) In establishing piece rates for workers with disabilities, the following criteria shall be used:

(1) Industrial work measurement methods such as stop watch time studies, predetermined time systems, standard data, or other measurement methods (hereinafter referred to as "work measurement methods") shall be used by the employer to establish standard production rates of workers not disabled for the work to be performed. The Department will accept the use of whatever method an employer chooses to use. However, the employer has the responsibility of demonstrating that a particular method is generally accepted by industrial engineers and has been properly executed. No specific training or certification will be required. Where work measurement methods have already been applied by another employer or source, and documentation exists to show that the methods used are the same, it is not necessary to repeat these methods to establish production standards.

(i) The piece rates shall be based on the standard production rates (number of units an experienced worker not disabled for the work is expected to produce per hour) and the prevailing industry wage rate paid experienced nondisabled workers in the vicinity for essentially the same type and quality of work or for work requiring similar skill. (Prevailing industry wage rate divided by the standard number of units per hour equals the piece rate.).